United Nations A/55/164/Add.1

General Assembly

Distr.: General
21 September 2000
English
Original: English/Spanish

Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 156
Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives

Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

I. Introduction

1. During the period from 18 July to 20 September 2000, additional reports were received from States pursuant to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 53/97 of 8 December 1998. The relevant information concerning those reports is presented in section II below.

2. Furthermore, three States submitted views pursuant to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 42/154 of 7 December 1987. The text of the communications is contained in section III below.

II. Reports received from States pursuant to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 53/97

3. **Estonia** submitted a report, dated July 2000, referring to a number of incidents, one in particular involving the Russian embassy. The report reads as follows:

> "There have been some incidents of theft and hooliganism with regard to the diplomatic and consular representatives' possessions, which are not in themselves directed against their safety and security.
>
> "On 4 October in 1999 there was one incident, in which the Russian embassy in Estonia received a threat by phone. No actual harm was done.
>
> "Other than that, there have been no serious violations of the protection, security or safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives."

4. The report, dated 14 July 2000, submitted by the **Holy See** described violations which occurred in Papua New Guinea against the diplomatic mission of the Apostolic Nunciature. The report reads as follows:

> "On 10 May 2000, one of the diplomatic staff of the Apostolic Nunciature in Port Moresby was attacked by armed men as he was nearing the Nunciature in a car of the same diplomatic mission. Again, on 24 May 2000, the two

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chauffeurs of the Nunciature were also attacked by armed men as they were driving the cars of the mission. In both incidents, thanks to the alertness of those chauffeurs, such dangerous attempts were fortunately foiled and no one got hurt."

5. The report, dated 21 July 2000, submitted by the **Philippines** referred to violations involving the Philippine embassies at Phnom Penh and The Hague. The relevant extracts from the report follow:

"The incident involving the Philippine embassy in The Hague occurred as follows:

"On 30 August 1999, a person or persons unknown gained entry into the embassy by forcing open a window facing the main street which led to the Finance Officer's office. The Finance Officer's office was apparently ransacked, although nothing appears to have been taken. The door of the Finance Officer's office, which leads to the rest of the embassy, was also forced open. It did not appear, though, that the intruder(s) had searched through the rest of the embassy. The police authorities were notified and a forensic investigation was conducted (photographs and fingerprint impressions were taken). The police investigation did not reveal anything that could lead to an arrest or even the questioning of a suspect.

"In Cambodia, four incidents involving the same Philippine diplomatic staff member, Mrs. Regina Perol, were reported as follows:

"1. On 25 June 2000, at around 1900 hours, the Perol family entered their home and found their mountain bike and several pairs of shoes missing.

"2. On 7 February 2000, Mrs. Perol's car, which had been left at a repair shop for repairs to be made to the air-conditioning unit, was stolen by an employee of the shop. The car was driven by the employee towards the border with Viet Nam. However, before reaching the border, the car was involved in a serious accident, badly damaging the car. The employee left the scene of the accident and has remained in hiding. Mrs. Perol has sued the owner of the auto repair shop and the case is still pending in court.

"3. In December 1999, the Perol family parked their car at a mini-amusement park. When they returned 30 minutes later, they discovered that the side mirrors of the car were missing.

"4. In November 1999, person or persons unknown broke into the home of Mrs. Perol during the daytime. Stolen were a VHS player, a camera, a voltage regulator and some pieces of jewellery. She reported the incident immediately to the proper authorities, including her military general landlord. A police station is located across from her residence. No suspects have been arrested to date."

6. **Sweden** submitted a report, dated 14 August 2000, describing an incident at the Honorary Consulate-General of Austria in Sweden. The relevant portion of the report reads as follows:

"Early in the morning of 6 February 2000, the premises of the Honorary Consulate-General of Austria in Malmö was damaged. Five paving-stones had been thrown through the windows of the entrance door. Anti-Jörg Haider slogans and a crossed-out swastika had been sprayed onto the façade of the building. When they arrived on the scene the police noticed a kind of smoke inside the premises. The perpetrators had thrown an incendiary bomb into the Consulate building, which contained explosives that detonated and set fire to a curtain. The fire died out of its own accord. No one was hurt and it was confirmed that nobody had entered the premises. A preliminary investigation was initiated and the charge was "damage against State, an action of arson". On 1 March 2000 the investigation was closed since no leads had been found."

7. **Bulgaria, Hungary** and **Ukraine** reported that there had been no serious violations.

8. With its report, dated 25 July 2000, **Mexico** offered the following:

"The provisions of international law concerning the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives are strictly observed within Mexican territory, in accordance with the provisions of article 133 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States."

III. Views received from States pursuant to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 42/154

9. By its report, dated 14 July 2000, **Bulgaria** provided its views as follows:

> "With respect to the Secretary-General's invitation to submit views on any measures needed to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives, we would like to emphasize that the issue of violation of diplomatic and consular immunity has been traditionally considered within the framework of violations committed by authorities or citizens of the host country. Another important aspect of this issue that deserves careful consideration are the cases when the violations of the protection, security and safety of the diplomatic and consular missions and representatives of the sending state are committed by citizens of that State."

10. By its report, dated 21 July 2000, the **Philippines** provided its views as follows:

> "With regard to the request for views with respect to any measures needed to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives, the Philippines representative would like to express the view that local authorities are encouraged to exert greater efforts to protect diplomatic officials, premises and property."

11. In its report, dated 14 August 2000, **Sweden** referred to close cooperation between sending and receiving States and wide accession to international agreements in the field. The report reads as follows:

> "Concerning the proposals for enhancing the protection of diplomatic and consular personnel, we would like to make a reference to General Assembly resolution 53/97 of 8 December 1998, of which Sweden was a co-sponsor, and the joint Nordic statement that was made in the Sixth Committee during the fifty-third session of the General Assembly. Both the resolution and statement call for close cooperation between sending and receiving States in order to ensure respect of privileges and immunities as well as a wide accession to international agreements in this field."

United Nations A/55/164/Add.2

General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 September 2000
English
Original: English/Russian

Fifty-fifth session
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Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

I. Introduction

1. A report was received from the Russian Federation pursuant to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 53/97 of 8 December 1998. The text of the report is contained in section II below.

II. Report received from States pursuant to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 53/97

2. The **Russian Federation** submitted a report, dated 14 September 2000, referring to violations involving the embassies and/or consulates of the Russian Federation in Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Lebanon, Poland and the United States of America. The report reads as follows:

Denmark

On 31 January 2000, the premises of the consular section of the Russian Embassy in Copenhagen were attacked. An unknown person threw two bottles filled with a flammable liquid through a window of the consular section's reception area. One of the diplomats was injured in the fire that broke out and the premises of the consular section and property of the embassy sustained serious material damage.

The incident was exceptionally dangerous and bore all the hallmarks of a terrorist act. Only through the courage and vigilance of the embassy staff were more serious consequences avoided.

The assailant, who was detained by embassy officials, later stated that he had made the attempt to commit arson "in response to the Russian Federation's actions in Chechnya". He was seeking asylum in Denmark on the grounds that "two attempts" on his life had been made in the Russian Federation.

On 27 May 2000, three unknown persons broke the windows, damaged the doors and smashed the mirrors of two Russian cars with diplomatic plates parked in a car park by the Russian embassy building in Denmark.

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Finland

On 28 May 2000, a group of Finnish citizens demonstrating under the slogan "Hands off Chechnya" penetrated the compound of the consulate general in Turku and attempted to tear down the Russian flag. The hooligans were removed from the compound with the help of the police. No material damage was caused.

Georgia

The Russian embassy in Tbilisi is operating in difficult conditions.

Since 1997, anti-Russian demonstrations and rallies have been held systematically in front of the embassy. In 1999, the Georgian Green Party repeatedly threatened in the local media "to throw radioactive waste into the embassy compound".

In the summer of 1999, the Ambassador's security aide was attacked. In addition, the apartments of several embassy officials have been burgled.

The situation of the embassy and its staff became more difficult after refugees and Chechen fighters began to arrive in Georgia in connection with the anti-terrorist operations in Chechnya.

The measures taken by the Georgian authorities to enhance the security of the embassy have so far been inadequate.

Germany

On 31 December 1999, at 11.15 p.m., a group of about 25 to 30 persons in an inebriated state penetrated the grounds of the Russian embassy in Berlin from Unter den Linden Strasse, breaking the lock of the entrance gate. Two officers of the Berlin Police's Central Department for the External Protection of Buildings who were on duty nearby failed to intervene in the situation and, moreover, left the scene of the incident, having been called away "out of concern for their personal safety". As a result, the embassy remained without any police protection for a prolonged period. It was through sheer good luck that none of the embassy officials was injured. The embassy building, however, was damaged. In addition to the broken lock, the expensive embassy plaque was damaged and the facade was soiled.

A protest was lodged with the German authorities in connection with the incident.

On 6 November 1999, a rock was thrown at a building belonging to the Russian embassy in Berlin, resulting in material damage, and it was only by chance that a small child present in the embassy building was not hurt. A representation was made to the German authorities concerning the incident.

Lebanon

On 3 January 2000, a terrorist act was committed against the Russian embassy in Beirut, which came under grenade and small arms fire. According to the available data, the Palestinian group Osbat al-Ansar was behind the act.

The embassy immediately made contact with the Lebanese law-enforcement agencies and special services so that measures could be taken to enhance the protection of the embassy and other overseas establishments of the Russian Federation.

On 3 January, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation issued a brief press release on the incident.

That same day, Lebanon's chargé d'affaires in Moscow was invited to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was told of the concern at the barbarous act and a strong request was made that the Lebanese authorities should take measures to guarantee the security of Russian citizens and establishments in Lebanon.

On 4 January, a telephone conversation took place between Igor Ivanov and the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lebanon, Sélim El-Hoss. On instructions from Vladimir Putin, Mr. Ivanov expressed confidence that the Lebanese leadership would do everything to protect the lives of Russian citizens and ensure the inviolability of Russian establishments in Beirut.

On 4 January, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a second press release, giving due credit to the Lebanese authorities for their decisive actions.

On 4 January, Mr. El-Hoss telephoned the Russian embassy in Beirut and condemned the terrorist act.

On 5 January, the President of Lebanon, Émile Lahoud, in a telephone conversation with the Russian Federation's chargé d'affaires, condemned "the cowardly act against the Russian embassy" and

expressed readiness to lend the necessary assistance in the area of security.

At present, heightened security remains in place at the embassy, since from time to time there are indications of the possibility of new terrorist acts.

Poland

On 23 February 2000, during a regular demonstration by anti-Russian extremist elements, the Russian Federation's consulate general in Poznań was attacked. In the course of the incident, the inviolability of the Russian consulate general was breached, the Russian State flag was defiled, the building of the consulate general suffered material damage and the lives of its officials were threatened.

Unknown persons have repeatedly threatened to perpetrate terrorist acts against the Russian embassy in Warsaw and the secondary school attached to the embassy.

The anti-Russian demonstrations outside the embassy building, which are organized by Polish pro-Chechen organizations, continue, accompanied by acts of hooliganism.

United States of America

In the spring of 1999, during the military action against Yugoslavia conducted by the countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the office of the Russian consulate general in Seattle was attacked and its windows broken.

From time to time there are renewed threats against the staff of the Russian consulate general in New York. Thus, on 24 December 1999, unknown persons threw leaflets into the compound of the consulate general calling for the extermination of Russians both in the territory of the Russian Federation itself and beyond its borders in response to the anti-terrorist operation under way in Chechnya. The leaflets contained abuse against the Russian leadership and threats of violence against overseas establishments of the Russian Federation located in the United States and their staff.